

When heathen pray

by David J. Stewart

It's heaven or hell, turn or burn! Call upon
Jesus!

“And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, AS THE HEATHEN DO: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before you ask Him.”—Matthew 6:5-8

When Heathen Pray

What a passage of Scripture! There are many wonderful truths in these few verses. It's very interesting that God mentions the "prayers" of the heathen—the "unsaved." It's startling to realize that many unsaved, wicked people actual pray. Many people fail to realize that most religion is "heathen" (NOT of God). Matthew 7:14 makes this clear! We, as God's Children, are warned NOT to pray as the unsaved religious people do (reading out of prayer books, praying to statues, reciting chants, etc). It's difficult to comprehend a person having religion and yet lacking salvation.

The fact is **religion is the worst thing that ever happened to this world**. It is religion itself that prevents so many multitudes from knowing Jesus Christ as personal Savior. Most of what people call "religion" is nothing more than the wicked trying to impress God by earning their way into heaven. "Religion" has taught people that "good works" can save them. Let me say to you, God cannot be impressed with your good works. Isaiah 64:6 makes it clear that any self-righteousness on our part is as "filth"

to God. If our "good" be filth in God's sight, then one cannot fathom what God thinks about our sins. God hates sin! God hates sin so much that the only way He could adequately describe the degree of His hatred was to tell us how He feels about our good works--our good works amount to nothing more than "filthy rags" in God's sight. Don't be misled my friend—you are a wicked sinner and unless you come to the Savior for the forgiveness of those sins, you will go to hell someday. No amount of good works or self-righteousness can make up for the sins we've committed, this is why Christ had to come die on the cross. The only thing that can save us is faith in Christ alone because of His redeeming work of atonement. Jesus shed His precious blood on the cross to pay for our many sins. **Jesus paid a debt He did not owe, because we owed a debt we could not pay.**

Can you imagine a person being religious all their life and then going straight to hell when they die? It happens every single moment, 24 hours a day. Do the math: there are an estimated 4 billion people in the world—the average life expectancy of a person is around 70 years old—this calculates to 53,000,000 people which will die EACH and EVERY year in the world—divide that by 365 days in a year and you have approximately 156,000 people dying EVERY SINGLE DAY in this world. How many of these folks do you believe are truly born-again Believers? Let's take a closer look at Matthew 6:5-8.

Most Heathens Do Pray

It is sad to realize that an unsaved person could actually be so blinded by false religion as to think that he or she was really a Christian. This is the great danger of religion and doctrine. **Every false religion will twist, misquote, add, subtract or diminish God's Word in one way or another.** So many people are praying to false god's. Satan knows that He'll have to do much better than merely trying to get us to rebel against God, so he tries to counterfeit the truth with lies (as much as possible). Satan has his own religions and bibles. This is why so many religious people think they're on the right track; **but in reality, they are headed straight for destruction** (hell-fire, damnation and torment). We are warned in Proverbs 14:12 and again in Proverbs 16:25, **"There is a way which SEEMETH RIGHT unto a man, but the end thereof are THE WAYS OF DEATH."** **"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and LEAN NOT UNTO THINE OWN UNDERSTANDING."** (Proverb 3:5). **It is a dangerous thing to re-create God in our own image.** We must obey God's Word! There is only one way for a person to get into Heaven—through the Lord Jesus Christ. **"Jesus saith unto him, I AM the WAY, the TRUTH, and the LIFE: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me** (John 14:6). Good works cannot save! Baptism cannot save! Keeping the Seven Sacraments cannot save! Keeping the Sabbath cannot save! Praying cannot save! **Only Jesus alone can save!** Satan seeks to mislead us and corrupt our thinking from **"the SIMPLICITY THAT IS IN CHRIST"** (2nd Corinthians 11:3). There ought to be a big sign hanging up outside of most religious buildings (notice I didn't say churches), saying, **DANGER! KEEP AWAY!**

YOU CAN'T EARN ANSWERS TO PRAYER—“...for **THEY THINK that they shall be heard for their MUCH SPEAKING**” (Matthew 6:7). Notice the words “they think.” May I say, they are thinking wrong! I meet so many folks who have crazy notions about life and God. Usually they have nothing to base their erroneous beliefs upon—it’s just what “they think.” This is so foolish and dangerous. Who are we to redefine truth and not obey God’s Word? God is NOT impressed with our prayers, He wants us to be impressed with His Son—Jesus Christ. God wants us to call upon Jesus Christ for salvation and the forgiveness of our sins. What you or I think doesn’t matter, it’s what God thinks that matters.

BURDENS GRIEVOUS TO BE BORNE—In this little tract, you are learning that we cannot impress God with our own efforts. So many cults and false religions place heavy burdens upon their victims with ridiculous practices. **For example:** Islamic Muslims are required to pray 5 times a day to please Allah. These prayer times must coincide with the cycles of the moon and the sun. If they fail to follow this ritual, they must seek forgiveness from Allah. Of course, this is not a Scriptural teaching. **Another example:** The Catholics believe that a person must confess their sins to the priest to be forgiven. This is wrong! Only God can forgive sin and we are NOT supposed to confess our sins to a mortal man who cannot forgive them. The Catholics are wrong to teach this. They also require people to bow in prayers of idolatry before a statue of Mary. These are the grievous burdens to be borne which Jesus spoke of in Matthew 23:4, “**For they (false religion) bind HEAVY BURDENS and GRIEVOUS to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders...**” No wonder Jesus Said, “**Take MY YOKE upon you, and LEARN OF ME; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find REST unto your souls. For MY YOKE IS EASY, and MY BURDEN IS LIGHT**” (Matthew 11:29,30). Do you want rest? Are you tired of carrying that heavy yoke of religion? Are you tired of bearing that heavy burden of unbelief? Accept Jesus now as your personal Savior!

Sincerely, Dave